

Appln. No. 09/811,724
Response dated July 13, 2006
Reply to Office Action of March 13, 2006

Amendments to the Claims:

Please cancel claims 19 and 20 as follows. The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-3 (Cancelled).

Claim 4 (Previously Presented). An advertisement distribution system which receives advertisement contents from at least one advertisement provider through a communications network, and provides at least one advertisement user with the 5 received advertisement contents through the communication network, said system comprising:

an advertising information storage unit which stores advertisement contents received from the at least one advertisement provider in association with advertisement 10 provider information for controlling provision of an advertisement and corresponding to the received advertisement contents;

an advertisement-user information storage unit which stores advertisement usage information for specifying a desired 15 advertisement of the at least one advertisement user;

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an advertisement extraction unit which extracts advertisement contents corresponding to advertisement provider information in association with the stored advertisement usage information; and

20 a transmission unit which transmits the advertisement contents extracted by said advertisement extraction unit to the at least one advertisement user having requested the advertisement contents,

wherein the advertisement provider information includes an 25 advertisement providing condition which is to be specified by the at least one advertisement provider for predetermined advertisement contents;

the advertisement user information includes an advertisement specification condition which is to be specified by the at least 30 one advertisement user;

the advertisement extraction unit searches an advertisement providing condition conforming to the input advertisement specification condition, and retrieves advertisement contents corresponding to the advertisement provider information including 35 the searched advertisement providing condition;

said advertisement extraction unit includes an advertisement selection unit which selects, when more than a predetermined number of items of advertisement provider information including the searched advertisement providing condition are retrieved, a

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- 40 predetermined number of items of advertisement provider information included in the retrieved items of advertisement provider information; and
said advertisement selection unit generates, when more than a predetermined number of items of the advertisement provider 45 information are retrieved, a predetermined number of random numbers which corresponds to the number of the retrieved items of advertisement provider information, and selects a predetermined number of items of advertisement provider information corresponding to the generated random numbers.

Claim 5 (Previously Presented). An advertisement distribution system which receives advertisement contents from at least one advertisement provider through a communications network, and provides at least one advertisement user with the 5 received advertisement contents through the communications network, said system comprising:

- an advertisement information storage unit which stores advertisement contents received from the at least one advertisement provider in association with advertisement provider 10 information for controlling provision of an advertisement and corresponding to the received advertisement contents;

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an advertisement-user information storage unit which stores advertisement usage information for specifying a desired advertisement of the at least one advertisement user;

15 an advertisement extraction unit which extracts advertisement contents corresponding to advertisement provider information in association with the stored advertisement usage information; and

20 a transmission unit which transmits the advertisement contents extracted by said advertisement extraction unit to the at least one advertisement user having requested the advertisement contents,

25 wherein the advertisement provider information includes an advertisement providing condition which is to be specified by the at least one advertisement provider for predetermined advertisement contents;

the advertisement user information includes an advertisement specification condition which is to be specified by the at least one advertisement user;

30 the advertisement extraction unit searches an advertisement providing condition conforming to the input advertisement specification condition, and retrieves advertisement contents corresponding to the advertisement provider information including the searched advertisement providing condition; and

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35 said advertisement extraction unit includes a changing unit, which changes an item parameter included in the advertisement specification condition when a number of items of advertisement provider information including the advertisement providing condition does not reach a predetermined number, so as to search
40 the advertisement providing condition conforming to the changed item parameter included in the advertisement specification condition.

Claim 6 (Original). The advertisement distribution system according to claim 5, wherein said changing unit repeatedly changes a corresponding item parameter included in the advertisement specification condition, until the number of items
5 of advertisement provider information extracted by said advertisement extraction unit reaches the predetermined number.

Claims 7-11 (Cancelled).

Claim 12 (Previously Presented). A method for receiving advertising contents sent from an advertisement provider using an advertisement provider terminal through a communications network, and sending the received advertisement contents to at least one
5 advertisement user from an advertisement server, said method comprising the steps of:

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storing the advertisement contents sent from the advertisement provider using the advertisement provider terminal and advertisement attribute information in association with each
10 other;

storing advertisement user information sent from the at least one advertisement user using the sent advertisement contents;

retrieving advertisement attribute information conforming to
15 the stored advertisement user information, and extracting advertisement contents corresponding to the retrieved advertisement attribute information;

sending the extracted advertisement contents to the at least one advertisement user;

20 receiving predetermined advertisement contents sent from said advertisement server to the at least one advertisement user and advertisement attribute information corresponding to the predetermined advertisement contents, and storing the received advertisement contents and the advertisement attribute
25 information sequentially in received order;

outputting and specifying one of the advertisement contents included in the stored advertisement contents, when using an advertisement;

30 outputting the advertisement contents specified by said outputting step;

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updating and retaining, every time the advertisement content is output by said outputting step, advertisement-usage-context management information corresponding to the advertisement content;

35 sending the advertisement-usage-context management information retained by said updating and retaining step to said advertisement server at predetermined intervals;

obtaining a number of output advertisement contents included in the advertisement-usage-context management information sent to 40 said advertisement server from said at least one advertisement user in said sending step;

determining whether the obtained number of output advertisement contents exceeds a maximum number of to-be-provided advertisement included in the stored advertisement attribute 45 information; and

when it is determined that the obtained number of output advertisement contents has exceeded the maximum number of to-be-provided advertisements, removing the advertisement content from target advertisement contents to be extracted by said 50 extracting step.

Claim 13 (Previously Presented). The method according to claim 12, further comprising the steps of:

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calculating an amount of money which is charged for advertisement charges toward the advertisement provider, based on 5 the obtained number of output advertisement contents which is obtained by said calculating step; and

issuing a bill representing the amount of money which is calculated by said calculating step, to said advertisement provider.

Claim 14 (Original). The method according to claim 12, further comprising the steps of:

calculating a payment amount to be paid to the advertisement user, based on the obtained number of output advertisement 5 contents obtained by said obtaining step; and

issuing a payment statement representing the payment amount to be paid which is calculated by said calculating step.

Claim 15 (Cancelled).

Claim 16 (Previously Presented). A computer readable recording medium which records a program for controlling a 5 computer function as:

an advertisement information storage unit which stores advertisement contents received from the at least one advertisement provider in association with advertisement provider

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information for controlling provision of an advertisement and
10 corresponding to the received advertisement contents;
an advertisement-user information storage unit which stores
advertisement usage information for specifying a desired
advertisement of the at least one advertisement user;
an advertisement extraction unit which extracts
15 advertisement contents corresponding to advertisement provider
information in association with the stored advertisement usage
information; and
a transmission unit which transmits the advertisement
contents extracted by said advertisement extraction unit to the
20 at least one advertisement user having requested the
advertisement contents,
wherein the advertisement provider information includes an
advertisement providing condition which is to be specified by the
at least one advertisement provider for predetermined
25 advertisement contents;
the advertisement-user information includes an
advertisement-specification condition which is to be specified by
the at least one advertisement user;
the advertisement extraction unit searches an advertisement
30 providing condition conforming to the input advertisement-

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specification condition, and retrieves advertisement contents corresponding to the advertisement provider information including the searched advertisement providing condition;

35 said advertisement extraction unit includes an advertisement selection unit which selects, when more than a predetermined number of items of advertisement provider information including the searched advertisement providing condition are retrieved, a predetermined number of items of advertisement provider information included in the retrieved items of advertisement provider information; and

40 said advertisement selection unit generates, when more than a predetermined number of items of the advertisement provider information are retrieved, a predetermined number of random numbers which corresponds to the number of the retrieved items of advertisement provider information, and selects a predetermined number of items of advertisement provider information corresponding to the generated random numbers.

Claim 17 (Previously Presented). A computer readable recording medium which records a program for controlling a computer function as:

5 an advertisement information storage unit which stores advertisement contents received from the at least one advertisement provider in association with advertisement

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provider information for controlling provision of an advertisement and corresponding to the received advertisement contents;

10 an advertisement-user information storage unit which stores advertisement usage information for specifying a desired advertisement of the at least one advertisement user;

 an advertisement extraction unit which extracts advertisement contents corresponding to advertisement provider information in association with the stored advertisement usage information; and

15 a transmission unit which transmits the advertisement contents extracted by said advertisement extraction unit to the at least one advertisement user having requested the advertisement contents,

20 wherein the advertisement provider information includes an advertisement providing condition which is to be specified by the at least one advertisement provider for predetermined advertisement contents;

25 the advertisement-user information includes an advertisement-specification condition which is to be specified by the at least one advertisement user;

 the advertisement extraction unit searches an advertisement providing condition conforming to the input advertisement-

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30 specification condition, and retrieves advertisement contents corresponding to the advertisement provider information including the searched advertisement providing condition; and
said advertisement extraction unit includes a changing unit, which changes an item parameter included in the advertisement
35 specification condition when a number of items of advertisement provider information including the advertisement providing condition does not reach a predetermined number, so as to search the advertisement providing condition conforming to the changed item parameter included in the advertisement specification
40 condition.

Claims 18-21 (Cancelled).